

ANGOSTURA UNIT
CONTRACT NEGOTIATION AND WATER MANAGEMENT

PUBLIC HEARING
ON THE
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

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February 13, 2001
7:00 - 9:00 PM
Rushmore Plaza Holiday Inn
505 N. Fifth Street
Rapid City, South Dakota

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Conducted By:

MR. KENNETH PARR
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
515 Ninth Street, Room 101
Rapid City, South Dakota 57701

and

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Dakotas Area Office
Bismarck, North Dakota

Tuesday, February 13, 2001

MR. PARR: I want to welcome everyone to this public hearing for the Angostura Draft Environmental Impact Statement. We've asked you to come here so you can give us comments on the Draft EIS, and I'll get into that here a little bit more.

But for the record, today is February 13, 2001 in Rapid City, again for public hearings on the Angostura Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Why we are here with this Draft Environmental Impact Statement is because in 1995 the water service contract with the Angostura Irrigation District expired after 40 years. United States Government, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is responsible for renewing that contract with the Irrigation District.

Shortly -- how do I want to explain this -- between 1996 and 2000 up to date here through 2002 we are in what's called an interim contract with the Irrigation District. And why we're in an interim contract with the Irrigation District is to provide water delivery to the irrigators, because we had to go through a NEPA process, National Environmental Policy Act process, under Federal Law, to evaluate the impacts of renewing the water service contract, and as a result we are conducting an Environmental Impact Statement on that contract renewal.

In addition to that NEPA process there is a

1 contract negotiation process, where once we're done with this
 2 EIS, the United States Government and Bureau of Reclamation
 3 enter into contractual negotiations with the District after we
 4 select an alternative from that Environmental Impact
 5 Statement.

6 So what happens then is through the NEPA process
 7 we give a Record of Decision, based on the NEPA analysis, and
 8 then from there we work with the district through contract
 9 negotiations where a new contract is signed.

10 I want to take a minute here to talk about the
 11 Environmental Impact Statement process. Four years ago we
 12 came to the public, both non Indian and Indian public, scoping
 13 out issues and to present this contract renewal to you all.
 14 And so we completed the scoping process; that's one of the
 15 initial stages when you're conducting an EIS.

16 From there we went back with that and developed
 17 alternatives and began writing this Draft EIS. We published
 18 that Draft EIS, so you all have copies of that now, and now
 19 we're in what's called a 90-day review and comment period
 20 which will end -- you have until April 27th to provide us
 21 comments.

22 After we get your comments, then we work on
 23 completing a final EIS, which that goes out for review and
 24 you have one more chance to give us comments through the Final
 25 EIS process. After that's completed we issue that record of

1 decision and then the Bureau of Reclamation goes through
 2 contract negotiation with the district.

3 For those who are not familiar with Angostura or
 4 Western South Dakota, I think everyone here is, but I just
 5 wanted to point out a couple things that are in the EIS and
 6 some of the analysis of the study area that we worked with
 7 within the Draft EIS.

8 This area here in the red there, that's the
 9 drainage area going into the Cheyenne River and into the
 10 Angostura Reservoir. The little red down here, that's the
 11 Angostura Irrigation District, and as we go past the Pine
 12 Ridge Indian Reservation, then we just -- we followed the
 13 water quantity and water quality and cultural resource
 14 analysis up through -- halfway through the Cheyenne River
 15 Indian Reservation. So that's kind of the study area that we
 16 looked at in the Draft EIS.

17 For those of you who are not familiar with an
 18 Environmental Impact Statement, here's the format that is set
 19 out in the Draft EIS. It's summary, purpose and need, the
 20 alternatives that we developed through scoping and through our
 21 work, affected environment, environmental impacts,
 22 consultation and coordination and the appendices.

23 All of that, up through consultation and
 24 coordination, are in here. And to try to save some paper
 25 we've put the appendices on a CD, okay. For those people who

1 don't have a computer or don't like to use them, I do have
 2 hard copies of the appendices up here. So after we get done
 3 with the hearing this evening, we would be more than happy to
 4 give you a hard copy of the appendices.

5 For those who have not received a copy of the
 6 Draft EIS and would like one, see me afterwards also and I
 7 would be more than happy to give you one. For those who will
 8 be taking a Draft EIS I would like to get your name and
 9 address. If you haven't seen one, that means you're not on
 10 our mailing list, so I would like to get you on our mailing
 11 list.

12 One thing I would like to point out is we
 13 weren't alone in this Draft EIS process. Under the National
 14 Environmental Policy Act and CEQR, Council of Environmental
 15 Quality and Regulation, we are required to look for
 16 cooperating agencies to participate with us in this EIS
 17 process. These are all the cooperating agencies that
 18 assisted us in either providing data or assisting us in
 19 analysis and presentation in the EIS.

20 One other step that's out there, for those who
 21 are not familiar with Indian trust assets and the Federal
 22 Government's responsibility with Indian tribes is that the
 23 Federal Government is responsible for consulting with tribes
 24 on federal actions that may impact those tribes or those
 25 Indian Reservations.

1 So we went out and asked many tribes their
 2 participation, if they wanted to participate in this Draft
 3 Environmental Impact Statement and three tribes, Oglala Sioux
 4 Tribe, Cheyenne River Sioux and Lower Brule Sioux Tribe
 5 requested to participate in this Environmental Impact
 6 Statement.

7 The purpose of this evening is to get your
 8 comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Tell
 9 us what you think about the DEIS, tell us if you like it, if
 10 you don't like it, if we're missing some analysis, or there
 11 should be some alternatives analyzed in there; that's what we
 12 would like to get from you.

13 There's a couple ways of doing that. One way is
 14 to get your oral comment, if you would like to you can do that
 15 orally here. I'll end my introductions and we'll open it up
 16 for members of the public here to give us oral comments.

17 If you do not want to give us your oral comments,
 18 we would like you to write your comments out, either on these
 19 comment cards or you have until April 27th to just send us
 20 lengthy comments on the Draft EIS; and our address and WEB
 21 site and phone numbers are available either in the Draft EIS
 22 or on our comment cards. So oral comments, written comments
 23 tonight or written comments by mail.

24 After we are done here with your oral comments
 25 we would like to then -- we would like to stop the public

1 hearing and then open this meeting up to basically be a
 2 workshop. So we have brought technical staff with us for you
 3 to talk to. Whether it's on the environment, like fisheries
 4 and wildlife and riparian, we have Jerry Heiser in the back
 5 there. Whether it's water quantity and water quality, it
 6 would be Conrad Jordheim and Jim Jahnke back here.

7 The economics that we analyzed in the EIS
 8 databases that we used, that would be Chuck Borda here. And
 9 behind the screen, I'll tear that down later, but on special
 10 interests such as Indian trust assets, cultural resources,
 11 paleontological resources we will be over here with Kimball
 12 Banks and Jim Kangas.

13 So after we're done with your comments, feel
 14 free to just visit with these people and ask them questions.
 15 Or if there's something in the EIS you don't understand, talk
 16 to them about that.

17 For the procedures here to go through, we have a
 18 small crowd here, so I think most of this is moot here on
 19 this overhead. But if it was a large crowd I'm just
 20 surprised I don't have 500 people here like DM&E had; we just
 21 don't have that here. But for the 20 of you plus that are
 22 here, that's good. Thank you for coming. We appreciate
 23 that. It's bad weather and for that I feel good. I hope you
 24 all make it home safe later on.

25 However, what I would like to do is if there are

1 Federal, State, Tribal elected officials here, I would like
 2 them to have the opportunity to speak. If there's any elders
 3 here, both Indian and non Indian elders, I would like to give
 4 them the opportunity to speak. We have no pre-registered
 5 speakers, so that's not important here. And then, well, I
 6 guess some of us are "others", so we'll go that route.

7 If there was a large crowd there would be a five
 8 minute speaking limitation. We're not to worry about that.
 9 But if you're going to provide a lengthy presentation this
 10 evening or comments, just remember there are other speakers
 11 here. Please do not speak out of turn. Let each speaker
 12 present their issues and concerns.

13 When you do speak, I guess the most important
 14 thing about this evening is to make sure you give your name
 15 and affiliation to the transcriber. And this is Lynne
 16 Ormesher, and she's our recorder tonight. She will be
 17 recording everything you say. So in about 30 days from now
 18 I'll read myself and I'll say, Man, I got lousy grammar. So
 19 just remember that when you are speaking.

20 If you are providing lengthy written comments,
 21 please just provide a verbal summary of your written comments
 22 because we'll be spending a lot of time on that. That's all I
 23 have on my brief introductions, okay.

24 I see there's a lot of recreators tonight. We're
 25 not spending any time talking about the cabins and boating and

1 wildlife management as far as around the reservoir and stuff;
 2 that's going to be dealt with later on. We will be conducting
 3 what's called a Resource Management Planning Process after we
 4 get done completing the Environmental Impact Statement for
 5 water management or contract renewal.

6 So we will deal with water management first,
 7 and then we'll deal with recreation and land management
 8 afterwards. And I do not know when we will start that
 9 Resource Management Planning Process, hopefully sometime this
 10 summer.

11 Well, that concludes my introductions, and in a
 12 minute I'll open it up for anyone who would like to provide
 13 oral comments. I think that's all I have for the
 14 introductions, so I guess do we have any Federal, State or
 15 Tribal officials that would like to begin providing their
 16 comments here?

17 We do have, after tonight there are four other
 18 meetings that are public hearings that will be held.
 19 Tomorrow night from 7:00 to 9:00 will be at Hot Springs;
 20 Thursday afternoon from 1:00 to 4:00 or 1:00 to 5:00 the
 21 public hearing will be held on the Pine Ridge Reservation at
 22 Kyle at the Oglala Lakota College.

23 Then we take a break and then next week, next
 24 Wednesday and Thursday; on Wednesday it will be at Eagle
 25 Butte at the Super 8 Motel from 2:00 to 4:00, and then

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1 Thursday the 22nd it will be at Lower Brule, at the Lower
 2 Brule Convention Center.

3 We can now, for those that would like to provide
 4 comment, we can either do it from our seats here or if you can
 5 come up here to the microphone, or we can sit and write our
 6 comments down.

7 This is like my church when no one says
 8 anything. I tell you what we're going to do here, I think
 9 what we need to do is just -- I think we're going to allow
 10 everyone to mingle around and talk to the different
 11 specialists, and then maybe at about 8:30 or so, if there's
 12 anyone who would like to come back and make a statement, we
 13 can do that then.

14 But I'm hoping that when you're done here today
 15 that you send us lots of comments. There's no sense in us
 16 sitting here for two hours. I think that would be kind of
 17 foolish, especially in this bad weather. You're wondering how
 18 long I can stand up here, right?

19 Yes.

20 MR. ERICKSON: Marlyn Erickson from Rapid City.
 21 I think probably most of the people in here, that I know
 22 anyway, are more interested in what we're not here for, which
 23 is your resource and water management process, which I think
 24 we probably didn't understand what this meeting was about at
 25 that time; in other words, your recreation part of it,

1 concerning the cabin areas, trailer areas, recreation and the
2 hunting part of it, that's what I'm thinking most people are
3 here for.

4 MR. WAMSLEY: Duane Wamsley, and there's a bunch
5 of us here that are boaters, fishers, that sort of thing, and
6 I guess my question is is there anything -- I mean you've been
7 down to the lake with us. You've seen kind of what we like
8 to do on the weekends, and I guess that's what a bunch of us
9 here want to do, is see if we can preserve that, and to the
10 best level we can.

11 Is there anything that we should be doing in
12 this initial stage here to protect some of the our interests
13 further down the road; is that a fair question to ask you?
14 Can you give us some insight?

15 MR. PARR: I will afterwards. Again, this is
16 different from when we were scoping or had other similar type
17 workshops when we were entertaining questions. At this point
18 right now I'm not going to entertain questions, but I think
19 when we break down afterwards for the workshop, as we start
20 mingling around and talking to people, we'll start addressing
21 that.

22 Unless we end the public comment period and then
23 we can just have an informal discussion, with me being the
24 specialist up here, there's a couple options but -- and we can
25 do that, but I'm not going to answer questions during the

1 public hearing part of it.

2 MR. WAMSLEY: Okay. So I make a motion and
3 second that we end the public comment segment.

4 MR. PARR: But I mean to try to get you people to
5 give some comments here, recreators are concerned about water
6 management. Anyone else?

7 Okay. I'll just state that the public hearing is
8 concluded for this evening.

9 (End of public hearing for February 13, 2001.)

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